



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Thurston Lake Fuel Break Phase II		
PROJECT LOCATION	T13N, R8W, Sec. 26, Mt. Diablo Base & Meridian (38° 56.846, -122° 42.738)	COUNTY	Lake
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Megan Scheeline, Forester I		
ADDRESS	CAL FIRE Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit HQ 1199 Big Tree Road, St. Helena CA 94574	PHONE	707-967-1428

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This will be the second phase of a fuel break project that was implemented in November and December 2014. The purpose of the project is to remove flammable brush along the south border of the densely-populated Clearlake Riviera neighborhood and Riviera Elementary School, less than one mile to the southwest of Clear Lake. The terrain adjacent to the neighborhood is steep and covered with extremely dense brush. With the prevailing wind direction being through terrain features from the southwest, creation of a fuel break at the south edge of the neighborhood and school will be a major asset in the event of a wildfire. In addition to stopping or slowing an advancing fire, the fuel break will be a location where crews could more effectively and safely combat a fire and improve the effectiveness of air tanker drops.

Vegetation in the project vicinity is dominated by mature, decadent brush including chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* spp.), and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), interspersed with small to medium-sized trees such as interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*), California bay laurel (*Umbellularia californica*), and gray pine (*Pinus sabiniana*). Hundreds of acres of flammable vegetation are adjacent to the homes at the edge of the neighborhood.

The project area is 8 acres, consisting of a strip 100 feet wide for a distance of approximately 3300 feet along the south edge of the neighborhood. The project area will be set back from the property line approximately 25 feet in order to discourage trespassing onto the property. Vegetation will be removed by hand crews or masticators. Material cut by hand crews will be chipped and spread in the project area. Dozers will not be used for vegetation removal during this phase of the project. Brush will be removed in a mosaic pattern, leaving trees and larger brush specimens interspersed throughout the fuel break.

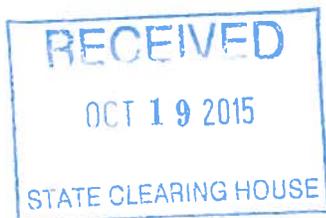
EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 §15304
Minor Alterations to Land
- Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits the description for a Class 4, §15304 – Minor Alterations to Land Categorical Exemption to CEQA. Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The project consists of minor treatments to land and vegetation in the form of brush removal using hand crews, chipping, and mastication. The activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species, or sedimentation to surface waters. CAL FIRE staff has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING



 Duane Shintaku, Deputy Director Date
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection